

Dorothy Dix Letter Box

Unhappy Victims of Free-Lunch Automobilists. Woman Who Took a Sorry Revenge Upon Husband. Sons Who Want to Make Their Old Mother Happy.

Dear Miss Dix—Won't you please publish something about those people who own motorcars and who start out early on Sunday morning on a holiday with their whole family and with a friend or two thrown in for good measure and ride up to the country to sponge on any one whom they can stand up for a free feed? From the beginning of summer until the end of it I spend every Sunday and holiday in the kitchen cooking for uninvited guests, who never seem to think that I might like a rest or to go out riding myself. Don't you think people should wait until they are asked and not come unannounced, and what would you do about it? DISGUSTED READER.



Answer:

You have a very good idea about who these acquaintances are who sponge on you during the motoring season. Drop them a little note right away, telling them that you don't feel financially able to run a free hotel and so you have decided to charge for your meals and that you will be glad if they will let you know when they are coming so that you can be prepared for them. That will hold them, for they are deadbeats who have no idea of paying for their food if they can graft it off somebody else.

We shed tears of pity over those unfortunates who are maimed and killed by automobiles, but if we have any weeps left in our system we might well bestow them upon those other victims of the automobile, the people who live on motor roads, who have their pocketbooks flattened out and their privacy slain and who are visited to death by automobiles who descend upon them without warning and eat them out of house and home.

Every one who lives in the country shares the same unhappy fate and learns to shudder at the sound of an automobile horn as at the trump of doom, for well they know that in a few seconds a car will pull up at the door and from it will descend a Jovial Crowd consisting of jolly Nick and Susie and the five little Nicks and Susies and a couple of friends that they have brought along with their brat, and the whole crowd will proceed to make itself at home with loud cries of "Oh, how thirsty we are," and "My, what a grand appetite motoring gives you!"

And poor Mr. Householder and Mrs. Householder, who had finished their own luncheon and were planning a ride themselves or were going to have a nice snooze or read a book they had been longing to get at, have to rush and put fresh towels in the bathroom and then lie out to the kitchen and scramble together all the food or the place. Then, after the motorists have left, the householders spend the rest of the evening washing the dishes and cleaning up after them and figuring up that they have spent all of the next week's market money on feeding a lot of people whom they don't care for and who don't care for them and who have simply made goats out of them.

It is a queer thing what the automobile does to people's manners and morals anyway. In town people don't invite themselves to your house for a meal. They wait until they are asked. Still less would they think of visiting their children, and perfect strangers upon you. Nor would any stranger who had any decency whatever wish himself unasked on you as a guest. But once let people get in an automobile and they throw all such social convictions to the wind and it is any free eating place where they can crash the gate.

Perhaps it is because it costs so much to run an automobile that it makes people feel they have a sort of right to get it back any way they can and rob anybody who will stand for it. But why everybody who has a country place is supposed to run a free roadhouse nobody knows. Apparently, however, automobilists are under that impression. Also, that meals are at all hours and that the woman of the house asks nothing better than to spend a happy summer making sandwiches for people she hasn't seen for years, but who suddenly remembered how much they loved her as they were passing by. This is the reason that most country places are for sale.

How the victims of the automobile gratters are to protect themselves I don't know unless they cultivate a nerve equal to that of their persecutors and shut their doors in the face of their self-invited guests.

DOROTHY DIX.

Dear Miss Dix—My wife and I are both well over 40 and will soon celebrate our silver wedding. We love each other dearly and have had a most happy married life. We have a family of four children of whom any parents might be proud and my wife has been a model wife and mother. But four years ago my wife had an affair with a doctor. She tells me she was not in love with him, but did this to pay me back because I admitted to her that I had not been a paragon before marriage. She coolly says that she is not sorry for what she has done? that she has had her little fling just as I had mine and is satisfied to stay by me from now on.

I don't know what to do. I am passionately fond of my wife and feel like letting the thing go, for there is no doubt in my mind that she is just as fond of me as ever and that she is sincere in her statement that she will never repeat her offense. It is four years since this happened and I have noticed no change in her attitude toward me.

PERPLEXED.

Answer:

"Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." You have the words of the Great Teacher to direct you in dealing with your wife.

If she forgave you, why should you not forgive her? Her offense against you is no worse than your offense against her. Her sin no blacker than yours. So wipe off the slate and kiss and forget it.

Feeling as you do toward your wife, you would be utterly miserable apart from her. Furthermore, it would wreck your life to break up your home and be parted from your children and to blacken their good name by bringing shame upon their mother. Nor is your wife a constitutionally immoral woman, a woman without inherent principle whom you cannot trust and whose influence would be bad upon your daughters, so you don't have to consider that side of the subject.

She has done a very foolish thing in paying you back in your own coin because two wrongs have never made a right, and I think that she will find that revenge is always a boomerang that turns and rends the hand that throws it. She has had her fling, but I wonder if she really enjoyed it as much as she thought she would and if, when she looks at her little girls, she doesn't wish that there was nothing in her life that she would be ashamed for them to know.

She stabbed back at you and hurt you as much as you hurt her, but I wonder if she doesn't realize that her act killed something fine and sweet between you that can never come to life again.

DOROTHY DIX.

Dear Dorothy Dix—Our mother is old and feeble. She has worked hard all of her life and we boys want her to quit housekeeping and board with one of the neighbors. Don't you think this would be the best for her? She does not care to be visiting around and by boarding she would be coming in contact with other people more. We want her to enjoy the next years as much as possible.

A YOUNG MAN.

Answer:

Your mother is a lucky woman to have such good sons who are so solicitous for her happiness. Without doubt your plan is the rational one for her, but you have to make old people happy in their own way, and you must remember that industry becomes a habit and that a woman who has worked as long as your mother has would find it absolute torture to have nothing to do.

She would be bored to death and wouldn't live but a little while if you

The Poets Corner

LEISURE

What is this life if, full of care, We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass, Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight, Streams full of stars, like stars at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance, And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care, We have no time to stand and stare. —William Henry Davies.

A Morning Smile

A Scotsman was persuaded by his minister to become an elder. The new official was doubtful of his ability to

take away her daily task. Furthermore, an old woman's home is not just a house to her. It is part of her very being and her furniture is not beds and chairs and tables. It is memories of her husband, her young life, her babies—life and death and all that has ever happened to her.

So, unless your old mother waits to go to board with the neighbor herself, don't move her out of her room. Hire some one to stay with her and let her keep putting around at her daily tasks as long as she can. That is the only way you can make her happy.

Household Hints

By Roberta Lee

Perspiring Feet

If the feet perspire, powder the stockings with one part chlorinated lime, one part prepared chalk, and one part powdered starch. Bathe the feet daily in cold water.

Crocheting

Keep the ball of cotton in a bowl or teacup when crocheting, and it will prevent the necessity of crawling on the floor after it at frequent intervals.

Cake Pans

Dredge the cake pans with flour to prevent the cake from sticking to the pans.

produce that extempore prayer which is sometimes called for.

To make sure he would never be caught unawares, he pasted a prayer in his tall hat.

The call came at a funeral some days later, when, as the parson had not arrived, the elder was asked for "a few words."

He went into the hall for his hat. He bowed over it reverently, as did his little audience. To their astonishment the new elder cried out in an agitated voice: "Guidness, this is no my hat."

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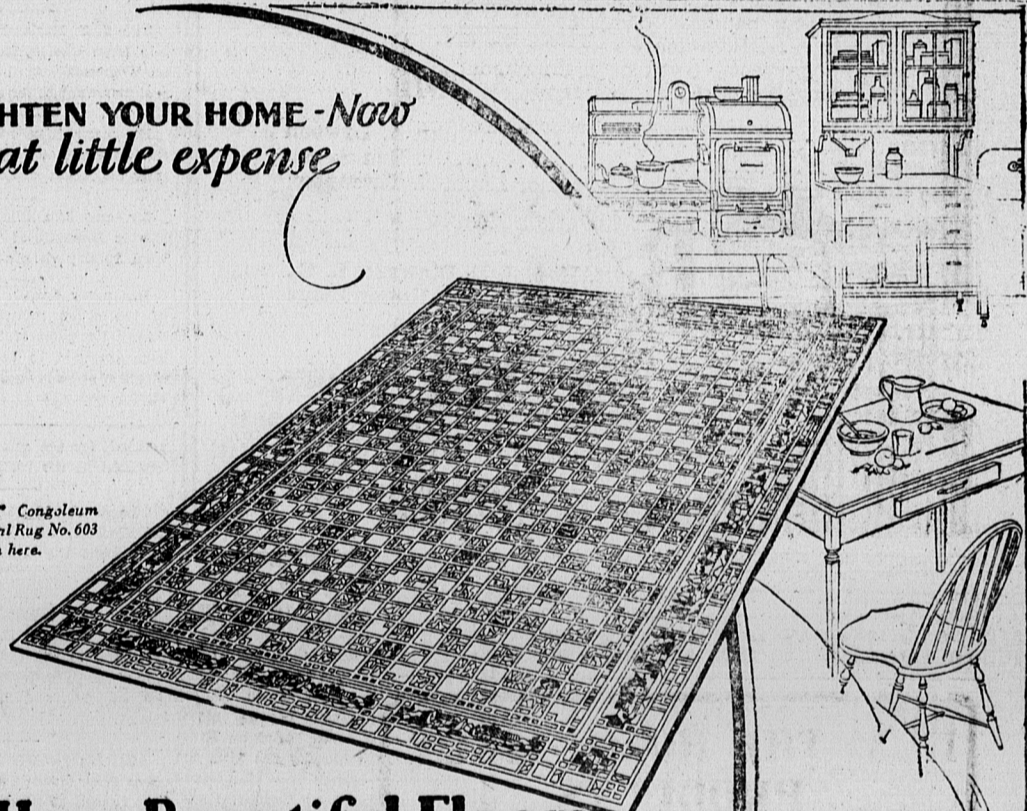
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